

FROM: Daniel Inouye

Approved For Release 2004/12/01 : CIA-RDP79M00467A000200050001-4

Executive Registry

76-8319

rec'd 23 June 76

1 Senator Bayh. Senator Morgan?

2 Senator Morgan. Mr. Chairman, I have just a word or two.

3 I would say, Mr. Knoche, that I have read your resume,
4 I heard you in the executive session, and I believe we worked
5 for the last 15 months or so rather closely, and I find you
6 extremely and uniquely well qualified.

7 I have not reread your testimony from the Church Committee,
8 but my recollection from hearing you during that period of time
9 is that you were candid and forthright with the Committee, and
10 I have no reason to believe otherwise.

11 I have only a couple of questions to ask you. As you know,
12 during the Church Committee hearings there was evidence over
13 a period of time that we had engaged in this country in
14 attempted assassinations, if not assassinations.

15 Do you believe that in peacetime there is ever any occasion
16 for this country or any of its agencies to engage in political
17 assassination?

18 Mr. Knoche. No, sir, I do not.

19 Senator Morgan. Do you believe in peacetime there will
20 ever arise an occasion in which it would be proper and expedient
21 for any agency of our government to engage in any kind of
22 assassination, whether political or otherwise?

23 Mr. Knoche. The use of your word "ever" is a very big
24 one. I don't want to appear to be debating with you on that.

25 I just want -- I want to be just as forthright in answering you

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1 on that question. I would want to leave some room, I would
2 think, of conceiving of some circumstances under which at least
3 the contingency might be discussed, but it is only the use of
4 the word "ever" that gives me a problem in answering the question.

5 Senator Morgan. You say the contingency may be discussed
6 or might be discussed.

7 What might that be?

8 Mr. Knoche. Let me try to answer the question this way,
9 and I am going to talk from the heart here, not as a bureaucratic
10 official. I can conceive of circumstances where we might be
11 asked to consider that. I can conceive of no circumstances
12 under which I would want to recommend assassination as a solution
13 to any particular problem in peacetime, but I think I am having
14 the trouble with the concept of never considering.

15 Senator Morgan. Maybe the possibility of considering it
16 might not be eliminated, but let me say I realize it is a
17 difficult question, and at times you may have to take into
18 consideration the consequences of the failure to consider, but
19 I would say, I think I express the sentiments of the American
20 people, most of the American people when I say that I don't
21 believe that we should ever engage in assassination of any kind
22 during peacetime..

23 I heard your discussion with regard to covert activity,
24 and it is a difficult area.

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director

Executive Registry

76-8319/1

Here is the passage covering this morning's hearings where the subject of assassination came up. In hindsight I would have been better off merely to note the Executive Order proscribes it, but on the other hand I think I made my position quite clear that it is in accord with the Executive Order, propriety, and all the rest.


E. H. Knoche

*noted by DCI
6/24/76*

23 June 1976

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